

Menacing Mosquitoes

Mosquitoes are a problem because they not only deliver an itchy bite, but can spread disease. Understanding these pesky bugs and where they live can help keep you from being bitten. Inside is some basic information on mosquitoes and important tips on how to protect your family against mosquito bites and possible contact with diseases they can carry.

For more information on mosquito control call your

**Local Health Department or
Mosquito Control District**

For more copies, please contact:
Washington State Department of Health
Office of Environmental Health & Safety
Local Health Support Section
P.O. Box 47825
Olympia, WA 98504 -7825
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Mosquitoes

TAKE THE BITE OUT OF THE BUG!

Protection Tips for You



Protection Means Knowing the Bug!

Mosquitoes Need Water

With about 45 species in Washington state, you are bound to have many annoying encounters with mosquitoes, outdoors and around your home. These mosquitoes all have one thing in common, their need for water to breed and grow.

They find moist surfaces or still water to lay their eggs. This water is often stagnant and

close to home in old tires, toys, ponds or pools, uncovered boats, birdbaths, even open buckets and dishes under flower pots.

Anything that holds standing water will do for a breeding site.

Before laying eggs, mosquitoes seek out a blood meal from a warm-blooded host—a bird, dog, horse, or you. While in search of a meal, mosquitoes are drawn to carbon dioxide, heat, and moisture. They track you down by your breath, skin temperature, and sweat. After dusk during peak feeding time, mosquitoes find you a very attractive target.

Did You Know?

Girls Only...

Only female mosquitoes bite. They feast on a blood meal to nourish their eggs. The males feed on flower nectar and plant juices.

MOSQUITO CONTROL TIPS

- Empty anything that holds standing water - old tires, buckets, plastic covers, and toys.
- Change water in your birdbaths, fountains, wading pools, and animal troughs weekly.
- Recycle unused containers - bottles, cans, and buckets that may collect water.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly, and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Fix leaky outdoor faucets and sprinklers.
- Make sure window and door screens are “bug tight.” Repair or replace if needed.
- Stay indoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are the most active.

Did You Know?

Main Attraction...

Carbon dioxide that you exhale attracts mosquitoes. They can find you from up to 20 feet away.

- Use mosquito repellent when necessary, and carefully follow directions on the label.

- Wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants, and a hat when going into mosquito-infested areas, such as wetlands or woods.

Protect Your Skin

Now that you know the basics about mosquitoes, you can take action. Don't let your yard become a mosquito breeding ground—get rid

of all standing water. Don't let yourself be on their menu—avoid mosquitoes when possible and protect your skin.

Repellents with DEET are very effective and widely used to reduce risk of mosquito bites.

Before you use any

repellent, read the label and carefully follow the directions. Take special care when using repellents on children.

Did You Know?

Busy Mom...

Culex mosquitoes lay their eggs in “rafts” that float on the water's surface. Each raft may contain hundreds of eggs. Under favorable conditions, these eggs can hatch and grow into adults in about a week.

Did You Know?

It's in the Spit...

When feeding, mosquitoes inject saliva into your skin to help extract your blood. It's the saliva that causes the itching you suffer from a bite. Mosquito bites can also spread serious diseases such as western equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, and West Nile encephalitis.



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